

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, WB, GW, GE

SUBJECT: GOVERNING MAYOR RAISES LUFTHANSA LANDING

RIGHTS QUESTION AND IS SHOT DOWN

1. SUMMARY: GOVERNING MAYOR SCHEUTZ TOOK ADVANTAGE OF LUFTHANSA'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY PARTY JANUARY 6 TO MAKE A PITCH FOR IMPROVEMENT IN BERLIN'S AVIATION SITUATION BY NEGOTIATIONS INTENDED TO PERMIT THE GERMAN NATIONAL AIRLINE TO FLY TO BERLIN. PUBLIC RESPONSE FROM FRG MINISTER OF TRANSPORT AND LUFTHANSA REPS WAS COOL AND FROM TAGESSPIEGEL POSITIVELY FROSTY. END SUMMARY.

2. SCHUETZ, AS MAIN SPEAKER AT CELEBRATION WHICH ALLIES HAD PERMITTED TO BE HELD IN NOW EMPTY MAIN HALL OF TEMPELHOF AIRPORT, EXPRESSED HOPE THAT LUFTHANSA, WHICH BEGAN IN BERLIN, WOULD BE ABLE TO "CARRY ON ITS OUTSTANDING HISTORY HERE." HER SAID

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THERE WAS NO GOOD REASON WHY BERLIN SHOULD NOT BE OPEN FOR TRAFFIC TO AND FROM ALL POINTS AND THAT WHILE ALLIED

AIR CORRIDORS WERE INDISPENSABLE THEY WERE NOT HINDRANCE TO FUTHER IMPROVEMENT OF SITUATION. GOVERNING MAYOR NOTED THAT QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT AND INNER-GERMAN AGREEMENTS BETWEEN BONN AND EAST BERLIN HAD PRODUCED "PARTIALLY REGULATED COEXISTENCE (HALWEGS GEREDELTES NEBENEINANDER)" BUT THAT SOMETHING SIMILAR SHOULD ALSO BE POSSIBLE FOR AVIATION TO CHANGE WEST BERLIN FROM AN "END-STATION TO AN AIR CROSSING POINT."

3. FRG TRANSPORT MINISTER GESCHEIDLE, WHO ALSO SPOKE AT CELEBRATION, AGREED THAT BONN'S AIR POLICY INCLUDED EFFORTS TO GAIN BERLIN LANDING RIGHTS FOR LUFTHANSA AND SAID THAT HE WAS NOT COMPLETELY PESSIMISTIC. HE INDICATED THAT SUCH A DEVELOPMENT WOULD OCCUR AT LESS THAN JET SPEED, HOWEVER, BY CONCENTRATING HIS REMARKS ON LESS CONTROVERSIAL MATTERS SUCH AS FRG DETERMINATION TO IMPROVE AIR SECURITY AND ECONOMIC BASIS OF GERMAN AVIATION. LUFTHANSA REPS AVOIDED SUBSTANTIVE COMMENTS DURING CELEBRATION EXCEPT TO NOTE IT REGRETTABLE THAT GERMAN NATIONAL AIRLINE CANNOT FLY TO BERLIN.

4. TAGESSPIEGEL EDITORIAL JANUARY 7 SHARPLY CRITICIZED SCHUETZ' REMARKS AS REFLECTING PERPETUAL SENAT OVER-OPTIMISM ON AIR MATTERS. NOTING THAT IGS ROUTES HAD LOST 2.4 MILLION PASSENGERS SINCE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT AND TRANSIT AGREEMENT ENTERED INTO FORCE, IT SAID THAT SENAT'S GRANDISE PLANS FOR DEVELOPING BERLIN INTO AIR CROSSING POINT ("LUFTKREUZ") WERE BETTER LEFT ON DRAWING BOARD SINCE "ANY PARALLEL AIR TRAFFIC BETWEEN BERLIN AND WEST GERMANY WOULD ONLY SUBTRACT FROM SUBSISTENCE-LEVEL FOUNDATION OF CORRIDOR TRAFFIC, AND NEW INTERNATIONAL NONSTOP CONNECTIONS WERE NOT SUPPORTABLE BECAUSE OF A LACK OF PASSENGERS." PAPER NOTED THAT LUFTHANSA HAD BUILT ITSELF UP AFTER WAR BY FOLLOWING SOUND MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND WAS DEMONSTRATING PRUDENT RELUCTANCE TO PUSH FOR BERLIN LANDING RIGHTS THAT COULD ONLY BE OBTAINED AT HIGH PRICE FROM SOVIETS AND GDR AND WHICH WERE NOT DEFENSIBLE FROM BUSINESS POINT OF VIEW.

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5. COMMENT: WE VIEW GOVERNING MAYOR'S REMARKS AS TAILORED TO SPECIAL OCCASION AND NOT INDICATIVE OF MAJOR PUSH FOR MOVEMENT ON LONG-STALLED LUFTHANSA LANDING RIGHTS QUESTION. DIFFIDENT RESPONSE OF GESCHEIDLE AND BLUND WORDS FROM TAGESSPIEGEL MAKE IT LIKELY THAT, ONCE DECORATIONS ARE DOWN FROM GOLDEN JUBILEE PARTY, SUBJECT WILL AGAIN BE GROUNDED. END COMMENT. GEORGE

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